(b) whether it is a fact that the rate of employment growth is dwindling; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) to (c) The rate of growth of employment in the country declined from 2.43% per annum to 1.02% per annum between the periods 1988—94 and 1994—2000. This was associated with a decline in growth of labour force from 2.29% per annum to 1.08% per annum in the same periods.

I.T. in Northern States

*375. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Northern States are far behind the Southern States in the field of Information Technology;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) what steps are being taken by Government to remove this regional imbalance; and

(d) in what manner Government plan to promote Information Technology in the Northern States?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD M AH A J AN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) As brought out in the Statement I, the disparity between the Northern States and the Southern States is marginal. The statewisc electronic production, which includes consumer, communication, computer, telecom, strategic and components for the year 2000 has been given at Statement-I *(See* below).

(c) and (d) The steps taken by the Government to promote the IT sector in the entire country (not merely Northern States) are given in Statement'II.

Statement-I

Statewise Electronic Production for by year, 2000

(i) Electronics Production-Statewise-2000 Northern States

State	1991			2000			No. of Units in 2000		
	Product-tion (Rs. Crores)	% Share	Rank	Product' tion (Rs. Crores)	% Share	Rank	Total	SSI	Employ-ment
1. Assam	2	0.03	21	7	0.02	23	3	2	100
2. Bihar	18	0.19	17	63	0.21	19	22	18	2000
3. Chandigarh	7	0.08	19	109	0.36	18	14	11	1000
4. Dadra and Nagarhaveii				5	0.02	24			
5. Daman				54	0.18	20	6	5	100
6. Delhi	921	9.47	4	2355	7.77	4	370	372	38000
7. Gujarat	361	3.71	8	1538	5.08	6	256	210	21000
8. Haryana	170	1.75	12	1435	4.74	7	98	71	10500
9. HP	19	0.19	16	216	0.71	15	21	8	2100
10. J&K	3	0.03	20	13	0.04	22	2	1	500
11. MP	151	1.55	13	748	2.47	10	50	33	10000
12. Manipur	0.5	0.01	23		0.00		1		50
13. Meghalaya	0.5	0.01	22		0.00		1		100
14. Orissa	33	0.34	14	47	0.16	21	12	6	2700
15. Punjab	353	3.63	9	600	1.98	11	59	46	9500
16. Rajasthan	254	2.61	11	491	1.62	13	91	69	10500
17. UP	1915	19.69	1	5844	19.29	2	196	144	58000
18. Uttaranchal				143	0.47	17	9	3	50
19. West Bengal	351	3.61	10	581	1.92	12	164	144	13500
TOTAL	4559						1375	1143	179700

(ii) Electronics Production-Statewise-2000 Southern States

State	1991			2000			No. of Units in 2000		
	Production (Rs. Crores)	% Share	Rank	Production (Rs. Crores)	% Share	Rank	Total	SSI	Employ-ment
1. Andhra Pradesh	585	6.02	6	1355	4.47	8	179	159	27000
2. Goa	22	0.23	15	167	0.55	16	15	6	1000
3. Karnataka	1750	18.00	3	5410	17.85	3	376	351	70000
4. Kerala	412	4.24	7	1175	3.88	9	89	61	12000
5. Maharashtra	1762	18.12	2	6057	19.99	1	862	759	65000
6. Pondicherry	12	0.12	18	233	0.77	14	14	14	400
7. Tamilnadu	622	6.39	5	1654	5.46	5	285	248	20000
TOTAL:	5165			16051			1820	1598	195400

(iii) Electronics Product ion-St ate wise-2000: Northern States (Rs. in Crores)

State	Consumer	CUE	Computer	Telecom	Strategic	Component	Total
1. Assam	7						7
2. Bihar	10	51				2	63
3. Chandigarh	50	54				5	109
4. Dadra and Nagarhaveli	5						5
5. Daman		54					54
6. Delhi	1180	200	410	no	5	450	2355
7. Gujarat	905	169	8	157	2	297	1538
8. Haryana	615	143	19	430	130	98	1435
9. HP	15	58		90	7	46	216
10. J&K	1		2	10			13
11. MP	32	45		91		580	748
12. Orissa	15	2		11		19	47
13. Punjab	115	15	10	185		275	600
14. Rajasthan	60	126	75	55		175	491
15. UP	2465	424	485	1065	325	1080	5844
16. Uttaranchal				113	30		143
17. West Bengal	270	71	15	125		100	581

(iv) Southern States (Rs. in Crores)

State	Consumer	CHE	Computer	Telecom	Strategic	Component	Total
1. AP	215	225	120	230	385	180	1355
2. Goa	62	2	68	33		2	167
3. Karnataka	1140	1080	520	1090	720	860	5410
4. Kerala	425	180	7	360	3	200	1175
5. Maharashtra	2740	850	1345	165	32	925	6057
6. Pondicheny		6	226			1	233
7. Tamilnadu	973	215	40	130	91	205	1654

Statement-II

Steps taken by the Government to promote the Information Technology Sector

1. Export Promotion Capital Goods scheme (EPCG) has been rationalised and extended uniformly to all sectors without any threshold limit on payment of 5% duty.

2. Approvals for all foreign direct investment proposals relating to the Information Technology Sector, with the exception of Business-to-consumer (B2C) e-commerce are under the automatic route.

3. Electronics Hardware Technology Park (EHTP) and Software Technology Park (STP) Schemes are implemented under the aegis of the Department of Information Technology, Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, through a single window mechanism of the Inter-Ministerial Standing Committee (MSC).

4. Supplies of Information Technology Agreement (ITA-1) items in the Domestic Tariff Area (DTA) by EHTP/EOU/EPZ units shall be counted towards fulfillment of minimum Net Foreign Exchange earning as a Percentage of exports (NFEP) and the minimum Export Performance (EP), provided that the items are manufactured in the unit and attract zero rate of basic customs duty. Positive NFEP is required to be achieved in 5 years instead of every year.

5. DTA access upto 50% of the FOB value of export is permitted for electronics hardware units under EOUEPZ-EHTP schemes and the software units under EOLPEPZ/STP schemes.

6. Accelerated depreciation norms extended to computers and computer peripherals to all units and capital goods of IT hardware units under Export Oriented schemes (EOIPEPZ^TP/EHTP). These shall stand depreciated to overall limit of 90% over a period of 3 years.

7. Special Economic Zones are being set up to enable hassle free manufacturing and trading for export purposes.

8. The Depreciation on Computers is allowed @ 60%.

9. In the Budget 2002-03, the peak rate of customs duty has been reduced from 35% to 30%. Customs duty has been reduced on stepper motors for computers rinters from 5% to 0%, floppy diskette and unrecorded magnetic tape from 15% to 10%, ink cartridges/ribbon assembly/ribbon gear assemblyiibbon gear carriage for use in printers for computers from 25% to 5%, 56 items of capital goods for manufacture of semiconductors from 5% to 0%, 24 items of capital goods for manufacture of electronic components from 25—35% to 15%, tools noulds/dies for electronics industry from 25% to 15% and on 46 items of raw materials for manufacture of electronic components from 25—35% to 5%.

*Customs duty on Computers and Peripherals continues to be @15% and all storage devices, integrated circuits, microprocessors, data display tubes and deflection components of colour monitors continue at 0%. The concessional rate of customs duty @5% for specified raw materials for the electronics industry (121 items) continues. Customs duty on Information Technology Agreement (ITA-1) items of WTO (IT and Telecom prollucts) continues @15% parts of Telecom continue @5%, parts, components and accessories of mobile handsets including cellular telephones continue at 0%.

10. The Central Excise duty structure was rationalised from multiple rates to single rate of 16% and single rate of Special Excise Duty (SED) @ 16%, in the Budget 2001-02, and continues.

11. Information Technology Software is exempted from Customs and Excise Duty.

12. Second hand capital goods upto 10 years arc freely importable.

13. (EOU/EPZ/STPEHTP) units arc eligible for Income Tax benefit on export profits, upto 2010, in terms of Sections 10A and 10B of the Income Tax Act.

14. Exemption of withholding tax on interest on External Commercial Borrowings (ECBs) is available to the IT sector.

15. Definition of Computer Software, as in Section 80 HHE of the Income Tax Act covers transmission of data.

16. Benefit of Section 80 HHE is available to supporting software developers.

17. IT Enabled Services are eligible for Income Tax benefit under Sections 10A, 10B and 80HHE of the Income Tax Act.

18. DEPB rate will be same for a product whether exported as CBU or in CKD5KD condition.

19. Threshold limit for obtaining "Export House" status reduced to Rs. 5 crores from Rs. 15 crores for small Scale Industry, tiny sector, cottage sector, units located in North East Statcs'5ikkim/J&.K, exporters exporting to countries in Latin AmericaCIS'Sub Sahara Africa and units having ISO 9000 (Series) status. The status holders are eligible for the following new/fcpecial facilities.

* 100% retention of foreign exchange in Exchange Earners' Foreign Currency (EEFC) account;

* Enhancement in normal repatriation period from 180 days to 360 days.

20. The donation of computers, imported duty free by (EOUEPZ/ STP/EHTP) units to recognised non-commercial educational institutions, registered charitable hospitals, public libraries, public funded research and development establishments, etc., two years after their use by the said units is permitted.

21. The second-hand computers and computer peripherals donated by an outside donor to Government schools and recognised schools run on a non-commercial basis by any organisation are exempted from customs duties.

22. Income by way of dividends or long-term capital gains of a Venture Capital Fund or Venture Capital Company from investment made by way of equity shares in a Venture Capital Undertaking, which has been expanded to include the Software and IT sectors, will henceforth not be included in computing the total income.

23. To give thrust to Venture Capital finance, SEBf has been made

the single point nodal agency for registration and regulation of both domestic and overseas venture capital funds.

24. There will be no tax on distributed or undistributed income of Venture Capital Funds. The income distributed by the VCFs will only be taxed in the hands of the investors at the rates applicable to the nature of the income. VCFs will continue to be eligible for exemption even if the shares of the VC undertaking in which the VCFs have made the initial investment are subsequently listed in a rcognised stock exchange in India.

25. Under policy on portfolio investment, Foreign Institutional Investors (Flls) are permitted to invest jn a company upto an aggregate of 24% of equity shares, extendable upto 40% subject to approvals. This limit was raised from 40% to 49% in the Budget 2001-02.

26. Tax holiday under provisions of Section 80-IA (Infrastructure Status) has been extended to Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and Broadband Network providers.

27. Two-way fungibility has been permitted for ADRs/GDRs. Local shares can be reconverted into ADRs/GDRs, subject to sectoral caps.

28. With a view to give a boost to the manufacturing sector, it is proposed in the Budget announcements 2002-03, to allow a deduction of a further sum of 15% of the actual cost of such machinery or plant acquired and installed after 31.3.2002 in case of new industrial undertaking or substantial expansion by an existing industrial undertaking. The proposed amendment will take effect from 1.4.2003 and will, accordingly, apply in relation to the assessment year 2003-04 and subsequent years.

29. To encourage re-location of industries to India, plant and machineries would be permitted to be imported without a licence, where the depreciated value of such relocating plants exceeds Rs. 50 crores.

30. Indian Companies wishing to invest abroad may now invest upto US$ 100 Million on an annual basis through automatic route

without being subject to the three year profitability condition, up from existing limit of US$ 50 million (Budget announcement 2002-03).

31. Indian Companies making overseas investment in joint ventures abroad by market purchases may now do so without prior approval upto 50% of their net worth, up from existing limit of 25% (Budget announcement 2002-03).

32. To induce more investment for R&D activities, a weighted deduction of 125% on the sums paid to any university, college or an institution or a scientific research association for the purposes of scientific, social or statistical research is available.

33. For reduction of transaction time for export/Import clearances, Ministry of Civil Aviation has finalized the scheme of 'Known-Shippers' for doing away with the 24 hours cooling off period.

34. Two shifts have been introduced on week days and single shift on holidays at the Air Cargo Complexes at Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Delhi and Goa.

35. Information Technology Act 2000 dealing with Cyber Security, Cyber Crime and other information security related legal aspects is in place to encourage expansion of e-commerce through internet.

Declaration of National Highways in Karnataka

*376. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Highways, indicating their length, declared as National Highways, so far, since 1998-99, in various States;

(b) whether Government of Karnataka has requested his Ministry to declare approximately 1100 Kilometre of roads as National Highways; and

(c) if so, the details of the projects and the action taken by his Ministry in this regard?